

Subcommittee on
National Policy Machinery

Staff Memorandum
November 1959

What Can Be Done to Improve State-Defense Coordination?

The task of planning and executing national security policy falls largely upon the Departments of State and Defense. It is therefore of prime importance to delineate properly the respective responsibilities of the two Departments, and to secure effective coordination in areas involving joint responsibility.

Some qualified observers state that too often our nation's political ends have been shaped to meet military means, rather than vice versa. Or else they maintain that the defense establishment has often been unable to secure adequate guidance concerning our foreign policy objectives when determining force levels and the composition of our weapons mix. They contend in addition that a failure to define more precisely the missions of the two Departments has led to a confusion of authority and responsibility, and in some cases a no man's land of decision-making.

The Subcommittee seeks answers to these specific questions:

1. Are the responsibilities of the State and Defense Departments in national security policy-making now correctly defined and divided? If not, what changes are needed?
2. Would a codification of the responsibilities of State and Defense be practical and desirable? If so, what might be its content?
3. What guidance does Defense need from State, and is it being provided? If not, what organizational changes might help State to provide, and Defense to receive, the needed guidance?
4. Similarly, what guidance does State need from Defense, and is it being provided? If not, what organizational changes might help Defense to provide, and State to receive, the needed guidance?
5. Many concerned with the above problems raise these more particular questions:
 - a. What is the proper relationship between State and the Joint Chiefs of Staff (and/or the Joint Staff of the JCS)? Should a representative of the Secretary of State participate in discussions of the JCS (and/or joint staff groups) when appropriate?

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b. Should a representative of the JCS sit with the Policy Planning Staff of State (and/or other State Department groups)?

NO

c. Is the responsibility of ISA now properly conceived? If not, what should it be?

d. Is there a need for a joint State-DOD-JCS Planning Staff? Can more and better use be made of ad hoc joint State-DOD-JCS task forces on special issues of national security policy?

Yes

e. Is more horizontal communication needed between State and Defense? If so, at what levels?

Yes

6. Should the Secretary of State be asked to testify in the Congress concerning foreign policy implications of the Defense budget? Should the Secretary of State be formally charged with more responsibility in connection with our defense posture and the Defense budget?

NO

NO but he should

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7. Would it be desirable to build into the State Department structure and staff, wider competence in military and scientific matters? In what other areas might it be particularly helpful to strengthen staff support for the Secretary of State? If so, what steps would help achieve these ends?

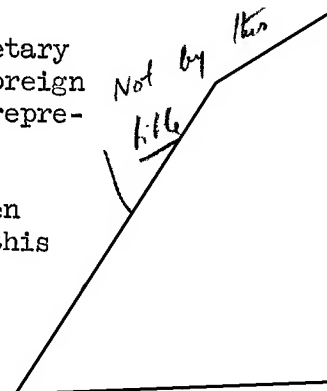
Yes

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8. To diminish the negotiating burdens of the Secretary of State, would it be desirable to create a Secretary of Foreign Affairs, responsible to the Secretary of State, who could represent the United States at Foreign Ministers' meetings?

Not by this title

9. In what areas might it be desirable to strengthen staff support for the Secretary of Defense, and how might this be done?



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